

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
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C O N F I D E N T I A L TAIPEI 04328

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS : PINT, SHUM, TW
SUBJECT : CH'EN CHU

REFS: (A) TAIPEI 04022, (B) TAIPEI 04129

1. GROC AUTHORITIES ANNOUNCED THE RELEASE OF CH'EN CHU IN A NEWS CONFERENCE HELD AT TAIWAN GARRISON COMMAND HEADQUARTERS AT 5:00 P.M. JULY 6. AT THE CONFERENCE, GARRISON COMMAND SPOKESMAN MAJOR GENERAL TUAN CHIA-FENG ANNOUNCED THE ARRANGEMENTS UNDER WHICH CH'EN'S CASE WOULD BE HANDLED. HE SAID, "MISS CH'EN CHU, WHO WAS SUSPECTED OF HAVING KEPT UNLAWFUL REACTIONARY DOCUMENTS, BOOKS AND PERIODICALS AND WHO WAS BROUGHT TO THE HEAD-QUARTERS ON JUNE 23 HAS FRANKLY ADMITTED HER MISTAKES, REALLY HAS THE INTENTION TO REGRET AND CORRECT HER PAST WRONGDOINGS, AND IS WILLING TO SEEK A NEW LIFE AND DEVOTE HERSELF TO THE ANTI-COMMUNIST CAUSE. THE GARRISON COMMAND COULD HAVE INDICTED HER IN ACCORDANCE WITH LAW, BUT RELEASED HER ON BAIL IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY OF GRANTING LENIENCY TO YOUTH AND GIVING TO THOSE WHO GO ASTRAY THE CHANCE TO START A NEW LIFE." AT THE CONFERENCE CH'EN READ A PREPARED STATEMENT (SEPTCL) AND ANSWERED QUESTIONS FROM REPORTERS.
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2. THE CONFERENCE WAS TERMED BY ONE CORRESPONDENT AS "HASTILY CALLED" AND WAS ARRANGED THROUGH THE GOVERNMENT INFORMATION OFFICE LATE ON AFTERNOON OF JULY 6. APPARENTLY NO WRITTEN NOTICES WERE EXTENDED; PAPERS AND CORRESPONDENTS WERE ALERTED ONLY BY LATE AFTERNOON TELEPHONE CALLS. SEVERAL REPORTERS NOT AT HOME MISSED

CALLS AND THE CONFERENCE, BUT WERE LATER ABLE TO COLLECT TGC HANDOUTS, INCLUDING COPIES OF CH'EN CHU'S HAND-WRITTEN AND SIGNED "CONFESSION" (NOTE: ICA EMPLOYEE Y. T. YU, WHO IS ON GIO LIST AS VOA STRINGER WAS NOT INFORMED).

3. IN HIS EXPLANATION OF CH'EN'S CASE, GENERAL TUAN REPEATED THE INFORMATION IN ORIGINAL GARRISON COMMAND PRESS RELEASE (REFTEL A, PARA 2) AND STATED "AFTER MISS CH'EN WAS BROUGHT TO HEADQUARTERS, SHE FRANKLY EXCHANGED VIEWS WITH THE AUTHORITIES. SHE CONSIDERED HER CONCEPTIONS AND DEEDS IN THE PAST TO BE WRONG. AS A RESULT OF THIS, SHE HAD BEEN EXPLOITED AND MISLED BY KUO YU-HSIN. SHE IS VERY WILLING TO REPENT HER PAST WRONGDOINGS AND TO START A NEW LIFE. SHE HOPES THE GOVERNMENT WILL FORGIVE HER AND SAID SHE WOULD MAKE EFFORTS TO HELP THE COUNTRY." PRESS ACCOUNTS OF THE CONFERENCE CLAIMED CH'EN HAD BEEN TREATED FAIRLY AND GENTLY. HER FATHER AND COUSIN REPORTEDLY CAME TO TAIPEI AND MET WITH CH'EN BEFORE THE CONFERENCE, WHICH THEY DID NOT ATTEND.

4. REPORTS INDICATED CH'EN COMPLETED NECESSARY PROCEDURES FOR HER RELEASE DURING EVENING OF JULY 6 AND WILL SOON RETURN TO NATIVE TOWN OF ILAN FOR SEVERAL DAYS' REST. FOLLOWING THIS SHE WILL BE GIVEN TOUR OF TEN MAJOR
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ENGINEERING PROJECTS ARRANGED BY GARRISON COMMAND HEADQUARTERS. CH'EN INDICATED DESIRE TO FIND JOB AS LIBRARIAN, AND HER WILLINGNESS TO SERVE GROC IF REQUIRED.

5. COMMENT: CH'EN CHU'S RELEASE RECEIVED WIDESPREAD COVERAGE IN ALL LOCAL PAPERS, CONTRARY TO PREVIOUS HANDLING (REFTEL B). CHINESE LANGUAGE PRESS THIS TIME INCLUDED FAR MORE DETAILED ACCOUNTS AND CARRIED FULL TEXT AND PHOTOCOPIES OF CH'EN'S STATEMENT. TGC'S PRESS CONFERENCE WAS CAREFULLY STAGED. WHILE TO THE SOPHISTICATED, CH'EN'S TESTIMONY MAY SEEM IMPROBABLE, AND WORDING OF HER STATEMENT OF REPENTANCE OUT OF CHARACTER, MANY LOCAL READERS MAY BE TAKEN IN BY THIS ACCOUNT WHICH PORTRAYS A MISGUIDED YOUNG INTELLECTUAL TOWARD WHOM GROC HAS TAKEN BENEVOLENT AND LIBERAL POSITION. PRESS REPORTS ATTEMPT TO LEAVE NO DOUBT IN READERS' MIND OF CH'EN'S GUILT AND ABILITY OF THE GROC TO PRESS CHARGES AT FUTURE DATE IF CH'EN PROVES UNWORTHY OF THE "LENIENCY" WHICH HAS BEEN OFFERED.

6. WHILE ENGLISH SOURCES HAVE CONSISTENTLY USED THE TERM BAIL, SOME OF OUR CONTACTS HAVE QUESTIONED THE

APPROPRIATENESS OF THE TERM. THEY HOLD THAT CH'EN IS RELEASED, NOT INDICTED, AND NOT UNDER FORMAL INVESTIGATION. SHE WILL APPARENTLY NOT FACE TRIAL UNLESS SHE VIOLATES THE TERMS OF HER RELEASE. WE SHALL EXPLORE FURTHER SUCH LEGAL ASPECTS.

7. EMBASSY WILL REPORT EDITORIAL COMMENT, REACTION AND ATTITUDES OF CH'EN'S ASSOCIATES AS AVAILABLE.

8. THE PRESS HAS BEGUN TO PUSH FOR COMMENT AND WOULD APPRECIATE DEPARTMENT'S CONTINUING TO SEND US PRESS GUIDANCE PREPARED FOR WASHINGTON USE FOR US TO DRAW ON. UNGER

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